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SOME FORGOTTEN INDIAN PLACE-NAMES IN THE ADIRONDACKS.

THE mountainous district known as the Adirondacks, comprising parts of Lewis, Herkimer, Fulton, Hamilton, St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton, Essex, and Warren counties in northern New York State, takes its name from a well-known Mohawk word, *rătiröntäks*, 'they eat trees' or 'those who eat trees' (masc. plur.). This term is in regular use at the present day among the Mohawks at Caughnawauga, P. Q., and elsewhere, to denote the so-called "Algonquin"¹ tribe who formerly had their headquarters at Oka (Lac des Deux Montagnes), not far from Montreal, but who are now, with the exception of a few families still resident at Oka, scattered throughout the whole of eastern Canada. These Algonquins, who are really a branch of the Ojibwe-Ottawa division of the Algic family, were wont in former days to hunt extensively in the Adirondack region, which was accordingly named after them by the Mohawk-Iroquois, who also ranged through the same territory.

The term *Rătiröntäks*, 'tree' or 'wood eaters,' as applied to this sept, simply indicates that the Algonquins, like the rest of their eastern Algic congeners, were essentially forest Indians, in contradistinction to the Iroquois, who called themselves *Rătinönsiönni*, 'those who build cabins.'² There can be no doubt that *Rătiröntäks* was originally a term of opprobrium in the mouth of the Iroquois, whose whole history shows an unceasing warfare with the Algic clans. A curious but probably incorrect tradition still exists among the Mohawks of the St. Regis Falls Reserve, that the Algonquins were called 'tree-eaters,' owing to their habit of clearing streams for their canoes by cutting trees and logs which had fallen across the water-ways. This is of course not a distinctively Algonquin trait.

¹ For the language of the "Algonquins," cf. J. A. Cuoq, *Lexique de la langue Algonquine*, Montreal, 1886; "Grammaire de la langue Algonquine" in *Mémoires S. R. Canada*, 1891. The Rev. J. Guillaume Forbes, Roman Catholic missionary at Caughnawauga, P. Q., kindly informs me that *rătiröntäks* is a polysynthetic combination of *kăröntä*, 'tree, wood,' and *ikëks*, 'I eat.' The following examples of the conjugation of the verb 'I am an Algonquin' will illustrate the Iroquois grammatical method:—

Këröntäks, 'I am an Algonquin,' e. g. 'I eat wood.'

sëröntäks, 'thou,' etc.

răröntäks, 'he,' etc.

tëwăröntäks, 'we, you, and I,' etc.

ikkwăröntäks, 'we, they, and I,' etc.

rătiröntäks, 'they,' etc.

Cf. also on this word, Cuoq, *Lexique de la langue Iroquoise*, p. 39.

² So Forbes. This is a verbal form from *kănönsä*, 'house, cabin.'

During a recent visit to Long Lake Village, Hamilton County, I called upon Mr. Mitchell Sabattis of the Abenaki tribe (Algic family), the oldest living Indian in the Adirondacks, who gave me the following Abenaki names of localities, most of which are in the neighborhood of Long Lake. My informant's father, the late Peter Sabattis, dead fifty years ago, but still remembered familiarly as Captain Peter, was a native of St. Francis, P. Q., the ancient reserve of the remnant of the Abenakis in Canada. Peter Sabattis and his Abenaki wife removed to the Mohawk community at St. Regis Falls late in the last century, where Mitchell was born about ninety years ago. The father and son were accustomed to hunt in St. Lawrence, Franklin, and Hamilton counties in company with other Abenakis, who gave names to a number of the Adirondack lakes and rivers, only a few of which, however, are now recalled by the aged Mitchell.

Of these the most important is the name *Saranac*, which is, according to Sabattis, a corruption of an Abenaki form *S'nhäld'nëk*, which he explains as meaning 'entrance of a river into a lake.' The same word appears in Laurent's "Abenaki and English Dialogues," p. 52, in the form *Sôn-Hälônek* as the native name for Plattsburg. As the Saranac River debouches at Plattsburg into Lake Champlain, there can be no doubt that the name was applied to the river at that point, rather than to the two lakes now known as Upper and Lower Saranac.

The Abenaki term as given both by Sabattis and Laurent presents many difficulties to the philologist. The Very Rev. M. C. O'Brien,¹ of Bangor, Me., an excellent authority both on the ancient Abenaki and its modern Penobscot dialect, believes that *S'n* (*Sôn*) *hălô'nëk* is either not an original Abenaki word, *e. g.* that it may be an Indian corruption of *Saranac*, or else that it must be a mutilated modern form. Owing to the following evidence, I am inclined to the latter hypothesis. The word may be a derivative from the two elements: 1. *sängöke*,² 'mouth of a river,' of which *s'n* or *sôn* in this combina-

¹ Fr. O'Brien, the Roman Catholic Vicar-General of Maine, has in his possession the manuscript dictionaries of the Abenaki by Père Aubery (1715), mentioned by Gill in his brochure, *Vieux Manuscrits Abenakis*, pp. 5 ff., 11 ff., Montreal, 1886. These works are very valuable for the study of the ancient Abenaki language. The references to Father O'Brien in this article are to letters from him to me concerning the place-names herein treated.

² The systems of noting the ancient and modern Abenaki differ slightly. In the ancient language the missionaries used the numeral 8 to denote the *w*-sound. The nasal *ñ*, always after *a*=*añ*, is now represented by *ô*=*ôñ* (as in French *mon*). I use the apostrophe (') to indicate a very short vowel similar to the Hebrew *sh'va mobile*, and the sign ' to denote a guttural voice-stop not unlike the Semitic *Ayin*. This is unfortunately not shown in the system of writing the modern dialect. Where the ancient speech had *r*, *l* now universally appears. In the modern words cited in this treatise the quantity of every vowel is marked. Note

tion is either a modern variant, or a slovenly pronunciation for *sôg* (see below); 2. *h'lā*, 'comes' (cf. *sôg'dā-h'lā*, 'it comes in,' said of a river). The regular modern equivalent of *sāngδk* would be *sôg*, according to the spelling of Laurent, *op. cit.*, but it is probable that in *sôg'dā-h'lā* we have a fuller form of *sôg*, e. g. *sôg'dā + h'lā*; cf. *sānk-ēdē*-teggδe, 'embouchure d'une rivière' (Rasle, Aben. Dict. p. 442) and the ancient name *Sānkēdē-rāñk*, 'outlet,' applied by the early Abenakis of Maine to the mouth of the Kennebec. The modern *Sagadahoc* is an evident corruption of this form (so O'Brien). In the form *S'n* (*Sôn*) *hālōñek*, *-hālōñek*, or more properly *-h'lōñek*, appears to be the locative verb form of $\sqrt{h'lā}$, e. g. 'the place where it comes in;' viz., 'the outlet into a lake,' as explained by Sabattis. In this connection may be compared *ari-rañnek*, 'the place where one goes by canoe' (O'Brien).

In spite of the difficulties of interpretation, then, we are justified in regarding *Saranac* = *S'nhālō'nek* as a genuine Abenaki word, first, because of the apparent possibility of resolving it into known component elements, and secondly, because of the evident appropriateness of the meaning 'outlet' to the Saranac River at Plattsburg.

Some Abenakis derive *Saranac* from *Salōnak*, "Sumach buds," which are very common in the neighborhood, but this is doubtful, as the term is not exclusively applicable to the Saranac region and, moreover, smacks of popular etymology.

Very interesting also is *Pāpōlpōgā'māk*, the Abenaki name for Racquette Lake. According to O'Brien, this may be a derivative from an ancient root *pδrbi*, or reduplicated, *pāpδrbi*, 'doubtful, deceitful, treacherous,' which is prefixed to the regular termination *-gā'māk*, meaning 'at the lake;' *-gāmā + loc. k*. With *-gā'mā* should be compared the Ojibwe ending *-gāmī*, 'water, sea,' as in *Kīchīgāmī*, 'big water; ocean.' The separate Abenaki word for 'lake' is *nepes* (see below). The ancient form of *Pāpōlpōgā'māk*, then, would have been *Pāpδrbañgamak*, 'deceptive lake.' Sabattis gives its meaning as 'in and out; full of bays,' which would be in harmony with this derivation, as a lake full of bays and points is deceptive to the navigator.

According to Sabattis, the ancient name of Tupper Lake was *Pāskāngā'māk*, 'side' or 'branch lake.' This is perfectly clear. The word consists of the well-known root *pāsk-* (ancient *pesk-* or *psk-*), generally signifying 'break, cut off,' + *-gā'māk*. We should compare here the present river-names Piscataquis (Maine) and Piscataqua

that *δ* is almost like *z* in but, while *ē*, *z*, and *ō* are obscure short vowels. The other vowels have the Italian values. The consonants are pronounced as in English except that *g* is always hard. The combination *kh* is not a guttural, but is to be pronounced separately *k-h*. The consonant *n* is a voiceless *tenuis*. The syllables in Abenaki receive almost equal accentuation as in modern French.

(New Hampshire), 'river branching off,' from ancient Abn. *pske + tegʒe*, the termination for 'river' (mod. *pāskā + tēkw*). The separate word for 'river' is *sībō*. To this same stem belong anc. *peskua'tekʒn*, 'branch of a tree,' and the modern verbs *poskwenômuk*, 'break with the hands;' *poskwkawômuk*, 'break with the feet;' *poskwzômuk*, 'cut with a knife,' and *poskwtahômuluk*, 'cut with an axe.' The verb *pask-hômuk*, 'shoot' (*pask-higan*, 'gun'), is undoubtedly a variant of the same root.

The name *Pāskāngā'māk* is peculiarly appropriate to the geographic position of Tupper Lake, which flows into the Racquette River between Long Lake, where the river begins its course, and Racquette Pond. Tupper Lake thus appeared to the Indians to be a branch of the river. It is really, however, the last of a chain which commences with the series of ponds just north of Little Forked Lake in Hamilton County. The lake now known as Little Tupper was called by the Abenakis *Pāskāngā'māsīk*, the regular diminutive of *Pāskāngā'māk*.

The name Long Lake, now given to the narrow river-like body of water, thirteen miles in length, which is the source of the Racquette River, is probably, as Sabattis states, a translation of the Abenaki *Kwēnōgā'māk*, from *kwēnō*, 'long,' + *gā'māk*. The root *kwēnō* appears in *Kwēnī'tēgōk*, e. g. *kwēnī*, 'long,' + *tēkw*, ending meaning 'river,' + *ōk*, the locative termination. The name Connecticut is a corruption of the allied Massachusetts term, which differed only in having the *-t* locative termination. The same root *kwēnī*, 'long' appears also in *Kwēnōbāāk*, 'Long Pond,' *kwēnākuēzō*, 'he is tall,' *kwēnī*, 'during, while,' etc.

Forked Lake, not far from Blue Mountain Lake, was named in Abenaki *Nīgītāwōgā'māk*, evidently with the same meaning as the English term, which is probably a translation from the Indian. As O'Brien points out, the stem here is undoubtedly the same as that seen in Niketous, used to denote the confluence of two branches of the Penobscot. In old Abenaki I find from the same stem *niketaʒtegʒe*, '*rivière qui fourche*' (Rasle, Dict. p. 523). O'Brien gives the same word from Aubéry as *nikʒdaʒattegʒe*, '*confluent de deux rivières*.' That this stem *niketa* or *nikʒdaʒ* is identical with that seen in Sabattis's form *Nīgītā-wō-gā'māk* is evident.

The Abenaki name for Mt. Marcy, which probably included its neighboring peaks, was *Wawōbādenik*, literally, 'white mountains' from *wawōbi*-, reduplication (pl.) of *wōbi*, 'white,' + *aden*, the termination for 'mountain,' + the locative *-ik*. The separate word for mountain is *wajo* (see below). It is interesting to note in this connection that *Wawōbādenik* is also the Abenaki term for the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

A curious instance of an Abenaki popular etymology of a purely foreign term is seen in the name for St. Regis Reserve, P. Q. and N. Y.; i. e. *Pō'kuizās'ně*, which Sabattis interprets 'half-shriek,' explaining it as referring to victories gained by his people over the Iroquois at that point. He also gives the name of the St. Regis River as *Pō'kuizās'nětkw*, and of St. Regis Lake near Paul Smith's, Franklin County, as *Pō'kuizās'ně-něpēs*. There can be no doubt that *Pō'kuizās'ně* is an "Algicised" form from the original Mohawk name for St. Regis Reserve; viz., *Akwēsāsně*, 'the place where the partridge drums,' a word compounded of *ākwēsās* = *wākwēsās*¹ + the locative suffix *-ně*. *Wākwēsās* itself is a compound of *ōkwēsēn*, 'partridge,' + *-ās*, which expresses the idea 'strike many blows,' as a drumming partridge does with its wings. In the Abenaki form *Pō'kuizās'ně*, the first element is the well-known, *pō'kuī*, 'half;' cf. Rasle, p. 561, *pō'kšie*, 'une moitié en large.' The second element, *-zās'ně*, as given by Sabattis, is undoubtedly from the stem of the verb *ne-sessinañ*, 'I bewail it'² (inanimate), Rasle, p. 508.

All the terms just treated were given to me as original Abenaki names of the localities, applied independently of any English nomenclature, and I see no reason to doubt this. In the following names my informant seemed a little uncertain as to whether the Indian terminology was independent of the English or not. He was unable to say whether the names in question were given first by his own people, or whether they were subsequent translations of English names. I cite them, however, as being of philological value for the study of Abenaki.

Bog Lake, *Mūkwā'kwōgā'māk*, and Bog River, *Mūkwā'kwētkw*, contain *mūkwā'kw*, 'bog,' anc. *megδak* (Rasle, p. 483, 'marécage'). This word is perhaps connected with *mekδ*, mod. *m'kuī*, 'red,' and is an allusion to the color of the bottom (so O'Brien).

Round Lake, *Pātēg'wōgā'māk*, and Round Pond, *Pātēg'wōgā'māstik* (dim.), are perfectly clear. For *pātēg'wī*, 'round,' cf. mod. *pēt'gwē-lōmsēn*, 'whirlwind,' e. g. 'wind blowing in a circle,' and the verb form *k'pētēg'ibēnā*, 'we turn, return' (inclusive we).

¹ Forbes gives the inflection of *ākwēsās* = *wākwēsās* as follows:—

kākwēsās, 'I drum with my wings like a partridge.'

sākwēsās, 'thou,' etc.

rākwēsās, 'he,' etc.

² The change of original *s* to *z* in *Pō'kuizās'ně* is due to the preceding vowel. Precisely the same phenomenon is seen in *sībōstš*, 'brook,' dim. of *sībō*, 'river,' but *sībōsīzēk*, 'in the brook.' I find also *k'chī zībō*, 'big river,' for *k'chī sībō*. The principle seems to be that when *s* is preceded by an *i*-vowel, and followed by a vowel, it softens to *z*. A similar softening of *t* to *d* is seen in the phrases *New York tali* 'at N. Y.,' but *yu dali* 'at this place,' e. g. 'here.' This is not represented in the modern system of writing Abenaki.

Lake Clear near Paul Smith's is *Wāsābāgāk*, lit. 'clear liquid,' from *wāsā* + *bāgā* + loc. *k*. *Wāsā* is descriptive of light of any kind, cf. *wāsān'môgān*, 'candle, lamp.' The ending *-bāgā* is an adjectival and verbal suffix used only of liquids; thus, *m'kāsāwbāgā*, 'it is black' (used of ink or water).

Finally, Black Lake, *M'kazawi nepes*, Cranberry Lake, *Pōpōkuā nēpēs*, and Blue Mountain Lake, *Wīlōwī wājōt nēpēs*, are perfectly plain and require no comment.

It should be remarked in this connection that in all these latter cases the names are so descriptive of natural features that they might easily have arisen independently and simultaneously both in Indian and English.

It may be interesting to note that the Mohawk name *Ne-ha-se-ne*, applied to a large preserve not far from Little Tupper Lake, means 'that is so;' '*c'est bien ça*,' and has no connection with the word 'beaver,' as is popularly supposed (so Forbes).

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